

Monday 8th November to Friday 12th November 2021



Headteachers' Blog

Year 11 Pre-Examinations

Spare a thought for Year 11 students who are currently undertaking their Year 11 Pre-Examinations. In the olden days, these were exactly as they sounded, examinations undertaken prior to the official public examinations. As we all know, in the Covid world, these examinations may actually become 'the' examinations – or at least form a good part of the final grade if exams are cancelled. So, they become a great deal more significant, and therefore more stressful.

The basic advice I can give is to have a plan of revision and practice, build in relaxation time, get plenty of sleep and eat as well as you can, and not to worry about what everyone else says when they leave the exam. If you have done your best, you have done your best, and it is only one small aspect of life. The examinations are important, but they do not define you.

Covid Update

We continue to register relatively few cases here at school thankfully, however winter flu and heavy colds are hitting us quite hard, with some significant impact on our staffing cohort. This means some critical roles such as Head of Year can be absent with very little cover, and classes are being covered by substitute teachers, when we can source them. This is a picture reflected nationally, with Geoff Barton stressing the challenge for schools in the national media through his role as General Secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders.

We are doing everything we can to minimise disruption, but please don't be alarmed if your child comes home and tells of numerous supply staff – it is a phase and it will pass.

Remembrance Day

On Thursday we will hold our Remembrance Service just as we did last year, with representatives of all of our tutor groups in the atrium to see our guests from Wattisham place the wreath on the plaque, to hear Oliver Hampton play The Last Post, and to hear readings from Maddie and Barnaby our Head Girl and Head Boy. We will then observe a two-minute silence.

During the week Mr Smith is leading assemblies telling students of the remarkable life of a local lad Spencer Bent, and his extraordinary life and achievements whilst fighting throughout the First World War, being awarded the Victoria Cross and Military Medal for his valour and bravery.

Mr Smith has started a campaign with the support of the British Legion to gain a special blue plaque for Spencer, who died in 1977. We are also selling poppies every day, so please furnish your sons and daughters with some coins to contribute. My thanks in advance.

Extra-Curricular

I am delighted to announce that we are now offering 100 extracurricular opportunities to our students – an extraordinary achievement, and evidence of our stated aim of bringing joy back into the student curriculum. This amazing diet includes the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, that this forthcoming weekend sees students heading off on their Bronze Expedition.

It also accommodates the sporting offers, such as the netball teams, who have been achieving so highly recently, with two teams in the county finals at the weekend – good luck to Yr. 9 and Yr. 11 girls.

New Website

With fingers crossed I am delighted to announce that our new website, still available at our traditional address is being launched soon. It is a website that I believe better reflects our new school, is easier to navigate and certainly easier to maintain and update. Any feedback welcomed.

Have a lovely week.

Mr Lee-Allan

Gum Shields for Contact Rugby

A number of Year 7/8 boy's groups will be starting contact rugby this week. Students have been advised that for safety reasons they need to have a gumshield. If you have been unable to purchase one your child will now be able to do so directly from the PE Department before their lesson. We will be selling them for £1.



The Co-curriculum

This half term we are offering students the opportunity to participate in 100 co-curricular activities a fortnight. Following a student survey, we have launched a lot of new clubs, we now offer fortnightly debating, writing and book clubs.

We are proud of Jacob Coleman in Year 9 and Harvey Steel in Year 7 who have begun running their own clubs. Jacob has started a Manga drawing club on a Thursday and Harvey is leading a team of students in Year 7 who are improving the school's environment.

At the end of last term Headmaster's ambassadors: James Broadhurst and Samuel Manning launched a co-curricular smart card during year assemblies. Students can gain certificates of merit and badges for attending clubs. Leo Pyke in Year 7 is the first student to gain the bronze certificate, congratulations Leo!



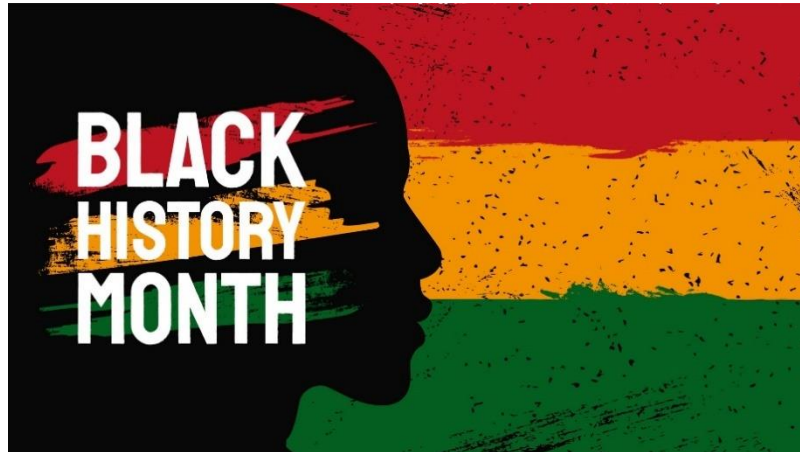
Jacob Coleman



Harvey Steel



Leo Pyke



October is Black History month; the time in the year when schools and the Nation recognises and celebrates the continued achievements and contributions of Black people to the UK and around the world.

At Stowmarket High School, students were involved in various initiatives aimed at widening their understanding of this too often ignored section of our society. As well as an assembly and work with the tutor programme, students were exposed to a 'Proud to Be' presentation showing in the Atrium, which showcased the contributions of many including Mary Seacole, the British Jamaican nurse who set up the 'British Hotel' behind the lines during the Crimean War; Sislin Fay Allen, the first Black woman constable in the United Kingdom and Britain's first Black female footballer: Emma Clarke.

Black History was also the focus of students' English lessons. In Key Stage 3, some students researched the inventions of People of Colour, while others explored an extract from the novel 'Crongton Knights' by Alex Wheatle and considered the lives of people of colour in school and the wider community. Students in Key Stage 4 explored the poem 'Thirteen' by Caleb Femi.

Black History a great time to learn about and celebrate our Black heritage. However, Black history can, and should, be recognised all year round. Within our English Faculty, we aim to recognise and celebrate Black History and wider diversity throughout our 5 Year curriculum journey.

Next week, we will be commemorating Remembrance Day both in English and across the school. As well as reflecting on the experience of conflict seen through the eyes of poets, we will be exploring the contribution of the thousands of Black African American soldiers stationed in the immediate vicinity of Stowmarket who literally built the abandoned runways that still exist across Suffolk today.





'It's essential that students across the UK are given access to books by Black, Asian and minority ethnic writers and those from a range of backgrounds, to ensure a better reflection of contemporary culture and society, and to provide students with both experiences beyond their own and experiences that may resonate with them. To help in achieving this mission, we've introduced the Lit in Colour Pioneers programme'

Pearson Edexcel

At Stowmarket High School we are proud to be Lit in Colour Pioneers. Together with 100 other schools in the country we were selected for the exciting project which aims to diversify the English curriculum and beyond by celebrating writers of colour. This project really complements the promotion of diversity within literature which the faculty had been championing through the introduction of new texts such as: 'The Play of Noughts and Crosses', 'The Bone Sparrow', 'Boys Don't Cry' and 'Refugee Boy'.

Within the package, Ms Lee, one of our English teachers, became the custodian of a Lit in Colour mini library including 300 Penguin books by Black, Asian and minority ethnic writers designed for all age groups. Last half term, Ms Lee began the process of disseminating these books throughout of student and staff body.

This half term, aided by Headteacher Ambassadors, Poppy Parry-Ward and Rehema Kansonkho, Ms Lee is launching a Lit in Colour Book Club where students and staff who borrow books from the collection can meet, discuss the texts they have read and, importantly, reflect on the messages that the books represent in their own lives and in the wider global community.

More Co-circular English Opportunities for Students

Together with the 'Lit in Colour' reading group, this half term has also seen the launch of a Book Club led by Ms Kerlake, and Mrs Arnold's Writing Club. These clubs will run alternative Thursday lunch times in the LRC. We hope to share some of the writing and reflections of these groups in future editions of the Parents' newsletter.



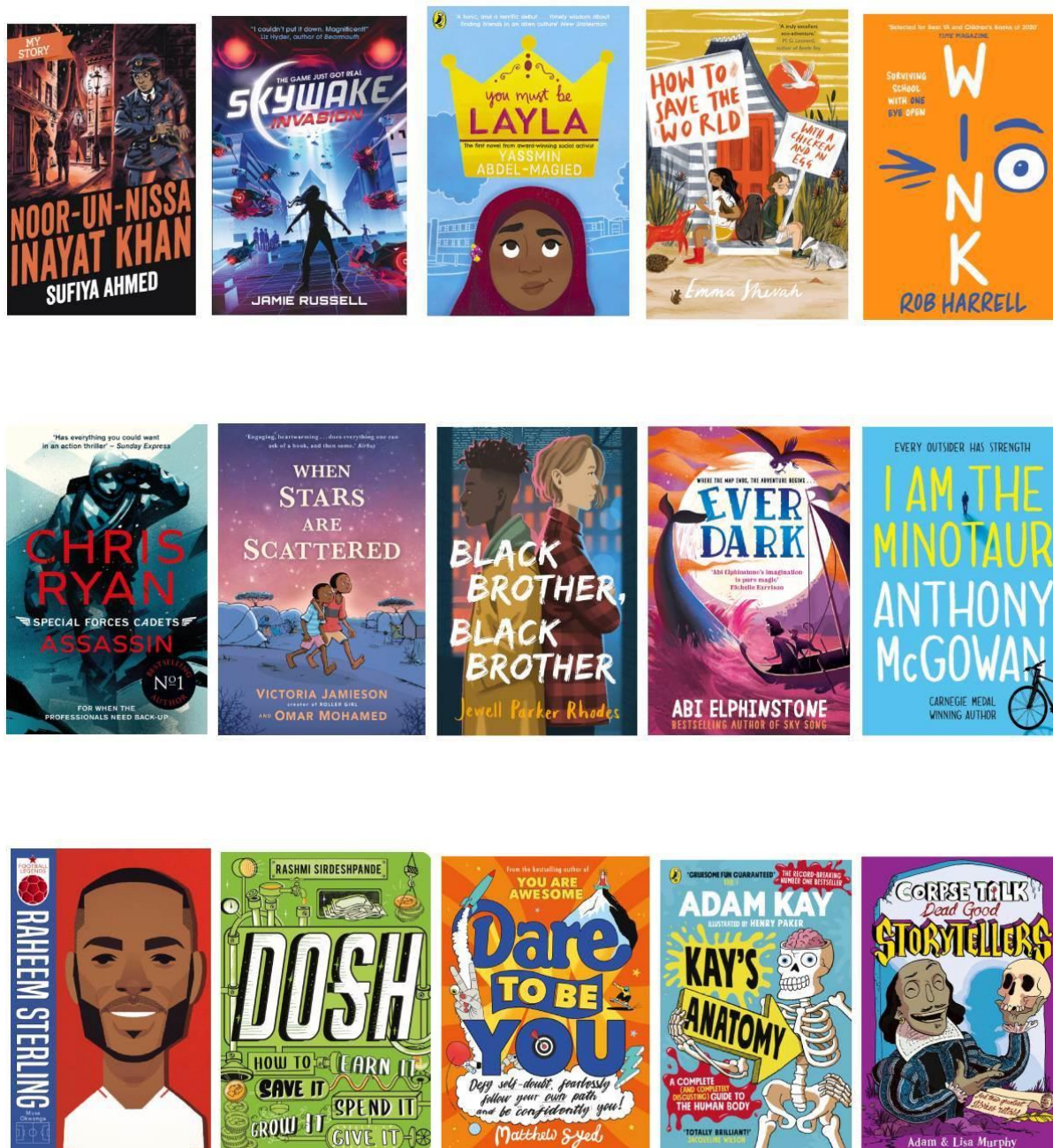
Year 7 Homework Reader:

Last week all Year 7 students have been given a copy of Kereen Getten's 'When Life Gives You Mangoes' which was made possible for the Book Trust's Bookbuzz programme. Each week students will be encouraged to read a chapter or two at home and then complete a knowledge quiz which will be posted on ShowMyHomework. The text has been selected to have wide appeal and it is hoped that students will read the book independently, with a parent or guardian or even read the story aloud with their siblings.



New Books for the Library

We have also just taken delivery of our free Library School Library Pack 2021/22 from the BookTrust. These books are now available for students to borrow during their next lesson in reading lesson.



Celebrating Bedrock Success during October

We continue to be amazed at the effort and progress so many of our students are making using Bedrock Vocabulary programme each month. Many students across all year groups will shortly be awarded for their outstanding effort this month with certificates and postcards for their efforts. Special mention is given here to the top 5 students for effort and attainment.

Class recording most points per student in October	70 Literacy
Class recording the most progress October	8G Literacy
Most Points Achieved during October	Progress Leader Board
Jack Roger 7I	Connor Yeo 8I
George Manser 8O	Cayden Lyons-Graham 7O En
Harvey Steel 7S	Taran Wright 10S/En
Olivia Steer 8T	Lauren Applin Hunt 10S/En
Emily-Jane Williams 9H/EN	Neyo O'Connor 9G/En

Pumpkin Competition

Balian Bevan in Year 8 won the pumpkin competition and therefore has chosen the Williams Syndrome Foundation to receive a £500 donation from the school. For further information on the charity follow the link: <https://williams-syndrome.org.uk/>

Well done Balian!



As part of Maths Week England all year 7 and 8 students are invited to take part in a friendly competition involving schools from England from Monday 8th November to Thursday 11th November. It's all done online via play.ttrockstars.com.

For every correct answer to a multiplication or division question, they will earn their class a point. The Times Tables Rock Stars platform will calculate the class average (the number of correct answers per pupil in the class who play during the competition hours, subject to a daily 60-minute limit (see below)). Winning classes in the school and in the competition as a whole will be the ones with the highest average.

All game modes (Gig, Garage, Studio, etc.) will count but only from games played between 7:30AM GMT and 7:30PM GMT on Monday 8th, Tuesday 9th, Wednesday 10th and Thursday 11th. To support player wellbeing, there is a daily time limit of 60 minutes per player. In other words, each player can earn competition points for up to 60 minutes between 7.30am and 7.30pm. Once the player goes beyond 60 minutes of play on a given day, they will still earn coins but will no longer earn points towards the competition.

In the spirit of the competition, please don't play on their behalf but by all means encourage and support them to the extent that it doesn't cause high stress levels or impact on family plans. We suggest a limit of half an hour a day outside school hours – some will play more, some will play less.

Dates for your Calendar

Thursday 11th November – Remembrance Day

Monday 15th November – Covid Vaccinations

Monday 15th November – Friday 19th – Cop 26 Activities

Monday 13th December – Flu Immunisations

Wednesday 15th December – Christmas Lunch

Thursday 16th December – Christmas Lunch

Friday 17th December – Christmas Hamper Competition



Useful Contact Information:

Head of Year 7	Mrs T Goodman	t.goodman@stowhigh.com
Head of Year 8	Mr S Peckford	s.peckford@stowhigh.com
Assistant HOY 8 & 9	Mrs T Shaw	t.shaw@stowhigh.com
Head of Year 9	Mr M Blewitt	m.blewitt@stowhigh.com
Head of Year 10	Mrs L Wellham	l.wellham@stowhigh.com
Head of Year 11	Mrs R Dolby	r.dolby@stowhigh.com
Finance		finance@stowhigh.com
General Enquiries		enquiries@stowhigh.com

To report a student absence please call **01449 613541** and select option: 1